Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. The amendments find full support in the claims and/or specification as originally filed.

Listing of Claims:

1. **(Previously Presented)** A method comprising:

limiting communication between users in a multi-user communication environment to a menu-driven system of pre-prepared chat messages until an authenticated relationship is established between the users;

providing a unique code generated by the multi-user communication environment to a first user in the multi-user communication environment; and

enabling free form communication between the first user and a second user in response to establishing the authenticated relationship between the first user and the second user;

wherein:

the authenticated relationship comprises an association of the unique code with the first user and the second user;

the authenticated relationship is established between the first user and the second

user in response to receipt by the multi-user communication environment of the unique

code from the second user; and

the unique code is not transmissible between the first user and the second user via

the multi-user communication environment.

2. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the unique

code is provided to the first user by the multi-user communication environment.

3. **(Original)** The method according to claim 2, wherein the multi-user

communication environment is an online multiplayer gaming environment.

4. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the unique

code is transmitted by the first user to the second user through at least one of an email

program, a telephone conversation, a handwritten note, a chat room program, direct

communication, a instant message program, and a facsimile.

5. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 3, wherein the first

user initiates real-time and secure communication with the second user after the unique

code is authenticated in the multi-user environment; and further wherein the pre-prepared

chat messages correspond to one or more gaming functions.

6. **(Original)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the code comprises a

sequence of symbols.

7. **(Original)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the code comprises a sequence of alpha-numeric symbols.

8.-23. **(Cancelled)**

24. **(Currently Amended)** A non-transitory computer readable media having instructions for facilitating communication in real-time between users in a multi-user communication environment, the instructions performing steps comprising:

limiting communication between users in a multi-user communication environment to a menu-driven system of pre-prepared chat messages until an authenticated relationship is established between the users;

providing a unique code generated by the multi-user communication environment to a first user in the multi-user communication environment; and

enabling the free form communications between the first user and a second user in response to establishing the authenticated relationship between the first user and the second user;

wherein:

the authenticated relationship comprises an association of the unique code with the first user and the second user;

the authenticated relationship is established between the first user and the second

user in response to receipt by the multi-user communication environment of the unique

code from the second user; and

the unique code is not transmissible between the first user and the second user via the

multi-user communication environment.

25. **(Previously Presented)** The computer readable media according to claim 24,

wherein the unique code is a random sequence of symbols generated by the multi-user

communication environment.

26. **(Previously Presented)** The readable media according to claim 24, wherein

the multi-user environment is an online multiplayer gaming environment.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The readable media according to claim 26, wherein

the unique code is provided to the first user in response to a request by the first user; and

further wherein the pre-prepared chat messages correspond to one or more gaming

functions.

28. **(Previously Presented)** The computer readable media according to claim 24,

wherein the unique code is valid for a limited period of time.

29-43. **(Cancelled)**

44. **(Previously Presented)** A method for initiating free form communication

between a plurality of users in a multi-user gaming environment via an exchange of

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words selected from a menu of predetermined words determined by the gaming

environment, the method comprising:

establishing predetermined word communication via an exchange of words

selected from the menu between a first user and at least one second user in the multi-user

gaming environment;

providing a unique code generated by the multi-user gaming environment to the

first user in the multi-user gaming environment during the exchange of words selected

from the menu of predetermined words between the first user and the at least one second

user;

transmitting the unique code to the at least one second user via a mode outside of

the multi-user gaming environment;

receiving the unique code from the at least one second user; and

the environment permitting the first and at least second users to thereafter

communicate via free form secure communication when the code has been authenticated

by the multi-user gaming environment.

45. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 44 wherein the menu of

predetermined words includes a predetermined set of word commands.

46. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 44, wherein the

unique code is provided in response to a request by one of the users.

47. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 44, wherein the unique code is valid only for a limited time.

48-58. **(Cancelled)**

59. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus comprising:

one or more processors; and

a computer readable storage medium, in operable connection with the one or more processors, having a program of instructions executable by the one or more processors, the program of instructions comprising:

code configured to limit communication between users in the multi-user online game to a menu-driven system of pre-prepared chat messages until an authenticated relationship is established between the users, the menu-driven system of pre-prepared chat messages comprising a set of pre-prepared chat messages associated with one or more game actions of the multi-user online game.

60. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus according to claim 59, wherein the program of instructions further comprises:

code configured to enable establishment of the authenticated relationship between users; and

code configured to enable free form communication between a first user and a second user in response to establishing the authenticated relationship between the first

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user and the second user, wherein the authenticated relationship is established via exchange of a secret code between the users;

wherein the menu-driven system of pre-prepared chat messages prevents transmission of the secret code between the first user and the second user via the multi-user online game.

61. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus according to claim 60, wherein the code configured to enable establishment of the authenticated relationship between users further comprises:

code providing a first user the secret code in response to a request of the first user for the secret code; and

code for receiving and authenticating the secret code from the second user.

62. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus according to claim 59, wherein the pre-prepared chat messages are restricted to a stored library configured to essentially eliminate certain communications between the users.

63. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus according to claim 59, wherein the menu-driven system of pre-prepared chat messages further comprises:

a first menu of pre-prepared chat messages provided to a first user in a first language, the first menu of pre-prepared chat messages being associated with identifiers;

a second menu of pre-prepared chat messages provided to a second user in a

second language, the second menu of pre-prepared chat messages being associated with

the identifiers;

wherein the program of instructions further comprises:

code configured to permit communication between the first user and the

second user via association of one or more pre-prepared chat messages in the first

language with one or more pre-prepared chat messages in the second language via the

identifiers.

64. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus according to claim 59, wherein the

menu-driven system of pre-prepared chat messages is dynamically updated to reflect

game tasks.